Elena's Nightmare and the Mysterious Ship from Beyond the Stars

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by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Unintentionally returning from a steam-powered city, traveling through space, hanging onto a gemstone for dear life is not what Elena, Isa, or Naomi had in mind… When they return to Avalor, all three are weary and injured from their journey. As challenges remain, Elena has a horrifying vision of her beloved kingdom under attack and an act she orders in retaliation. As she is comforted by her wife, she makes a mistake which causes unannounced visitors to appear in the forest nearby Avalor City. How will she confront these new threats to her kingdom? What does the future for herself and her friends bode, considering the uncertainty ahead?

Notes

This series is a split off from another series I just started, called The Steamland Chronicles. Unlike that series, this one will specifically focus on Avalor and Avalor alone. There will be some mentions of Steamland from Disenchantment, but only to give context. I am building up to an eventual confrontation, story by story, and I am thinking of having a total of ten stories in this series, but that could be expanded. As always, comments and suggestions, whether constructive criticism, improvements, or whatnot, are always welcome.

Update on 12/13/24: This fic was cross-posted on Squidge World. The revised version has been added here.

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by The Intoxicating Allure of Steam Power and the Future of Avalor by lefemmerouge

Elena, Isa, and Naomi, their hands glued to the diamond, went flying through the plains of space and time at an incredible speed, so fast that *none of them* could even comprehend it. They slammed into the fountain in one of the courtyards of the royal palace and the gemstone shattered into a thousand pieces. They were not as lucky. They bounced off the fountain and onto the nearby hard cobblestones. They were delirious from their journey and aching all over.

Scratching her head, Naomi angrily asked Elena, "what the hell was *that*?"

Elena groaned. She weakly reached out her hand to Naomi, lightly touching her arm. "I… don't know...that stone took over my mind...and I hurt you…Nomes…I'm sorry…I wish I could…"

She let go of Naomi's arm and fell face down onto the cobblestones. Naomi realized she had been *too harsh*.

She soon flipped Elena over, slapping her on the face. "Wake up, god damn it! PLEASE!"

She started crying as she held Elena in her arms. Isa cried out. "Someone help! Elena's injured!"

Francisco and Louisa, taking a morning stroll, came running toward the fountain. Even though they were of a ripe old age, they still had pep in their step, *unusual* for elderly people in Avalor such as themselves. With a tear streaming down her cheek, she grabbed Elena, and with the help of Naomi, both carried her into the palace. Thanks to a pulley system Isa had developed, they managed, with the help of Francisco, to bring her up to the elaborate bed in her room, the same one she had as a princess. Isa had installed rudimentary elevators which were not steam powered, like those in Steamland, consisting of a huge platform with rope handles on each side which had to be moved up by hand, inch by inch, foot by foot.

Francisco, Louisa, Isa, and Naomi watched Elena worryingly, then she began snoring, with everyone letting out a huge laugh.

"Oh, that's my Nena for you," Naomi giggled, remembering that Elena had pointed out her snoring to friends in the past, embarrassing her.

Just as exhausted, she laid down next to Elena and snored, with her arm wrapped around Elena's waist, lovingly. "Aw, that's cute," Louisa said, tiptoeing out of the room, to let the queen and her wife sleep until they felt better, even though it was the middle of the afternoon.

Isa and Francisco followed her lead and retired to the lush, almost always vacant, library. It was more like a royal study since there *no specific librarian* was assigned to that part of the palace. Different members of the royal family did their part to make sure the books and materials remained organized.

Sitting down in one of the chairs, Francisco addressed Isa. "You should rest too. It had to be a *weary journey*." She moved her head from side to side.

"No, Abuelo, I don't want to…my sister and Naomi might be tired…I'd like to tell *you* what happened."

Louisa was puzzled. "Don't you want to save this for the Grand Council, mija?"

She moved her head side to side again, then pointed to her journal where she had taken notes about their journey to Steamland. "I would and I will…I just have a lot to get off my chest, if you'd care to listen."

She delighted them with tales of the steamrail, steam-powered camera, photograph, and wonderfulness of everything around them. She left out the part where Lady Bowmore flirted with Elena, Naomi, and herself, because she didn't want to her grandparents to be further concerned about her safety. She showed off the photograph that Bowmore, who she called a "nice lady," took in front of the archives and gave to them free of charge. Then, she bowed her head.

"After that, we entered the archives. That's when it went south."

Francisco and Luisa did not understand what she meant. From an incredibly early age, Isa always fancied knowledge and learning, reveling in every new fact. So, her negative position on the archives made little sense.

"What happened there, Isa?" Francisco questioned.

Isa continued her story. "It was good at first, and the building was amazing…so grand and majestic...Then, Naomi saw that diamond, and that's when it went downhill."

"*How*, mija?" Louisa asked, inquisitively.

"The gemstone looked like the one in Elena's staff…the royal scepter. It broke out of the glass container and flew into the air, landing in her hand," Isa replied.

Isa winced and started sobbing. "She wouldn't let go of the diamond and got *this look* in her eye. All these people had their weapons pointed at her and threatened to attack her. We told her to set it down. Instead, she remained defiant, grabbed me and Naomi, we all shouted something, and then we somehow arrived back here... in Avalor."

Francisco approached her, increasingly distressed. "What…happened…to the diamond?"

Isa shrugged her shoulders. "I'm not sure…I *think* it smashed apart somehow. The shards are still out there by the fountain, I believe."

Rubbing his chin, he stated, "we must get those stones so *someone else* doesn't suffer like she did"

Isa exclaimed. "You are right. I'll get my mechanical dust-pan-broom combo pack! You two go out there and make sure no one gets near the shards."

In no time at all, Francisco, Luisa, and Isa worked together to make sure all the pieces were swept up, later to be put within the royal treasury for safekeeping. All three resolved to take

the shards to the Royal Avaloran Archives, in a separate building within the palace, to find out what they really were and learn the true power of the cyan diamond. In some cases, archives, were underground, away from prying eyes. Even under Elena's early years as Crown Princess, the archives were in a deep, dark cavern with cobwebs that no one, other than the most adventurous ones, visited, and only on rare occasions. As one of first acts as the queen of Avalor, Elena worked with Isa to ensure that the archives could be *more accessible* to the citizenry as a whole and those within the palace.

The collections were moved to a location above-ground instead of in a dingy cave, and the archives was required to have a plan in place to safeguard all the records within their holdings. Every archivist had a responsibility to preserve records under their care, with a specialized team within the institution implementing and creating standards, and policies, to ensure that that the archives *could be an effective recordkeeper* of the materials of Avalor. These rules and regulations were informed by an awareness of the ways that records could deteriorate, various preservation principles, proper storage environments, procedures for correctly handling records, and even creating duplicate copies if necessary. There were even strategies in place for potential emergencies and other methods to ensure that the collections are sustained for the long-term. When it came to access, staff worked to ensure that records were widely available, coordinating with the organization or individual who created the records to restrict or limit use to items considered vital to the royal family and security of the kingdom of Avalor as a whole.

Meanwhile, Elena tossed and turned in her bed. She *imagined* a world where a fleet of airships, zeppelins, and other flying machines, commanded by a skinny and curvy woman wearing a purple gown, who had purple lipstick and heavy black eyeliner, was advancing toward Avalor. They issued her an ultimatum, telling her to surrender the diamond and consenting to their request: becoming a vassal state of Steamland. She steadfastly refused. A ferocious battle raged, with many of the houses in the city set on fire by incendiary devices dropped by the airships. This dream fast-forwarded to the battles' aftermath with extensive damage to the city. Elena and her new friends had been successful at defending the city, but at a high cost. She furiously yelled at her spirit guide, Zuzo, the words "I wish that fucker Alva Gunderson were dead! He has to pay for what he did to Avalor!" Zuzo *reluctantly* acceded to her request.

Before she saw any more of this dream, she shot up out of bed, belting at the top of her lungs. Soon she was sweating uncontrollably, cowering on the floor, and utterly terrified. Naomi instantly woke up and rushed over the Elena.

"Are you ok, sweetie? Is there anything I can do?"

Elena groaned. "Nomes, I had the worst nightmare…Avalor was under attack by a bunch of flying machines…and we won."

Naomi shrugged. "That doesn't sound *bad*."

Elena shook her head. "It *was* though. Houses were set on fire by some devices dropped by these flying machines…and I ordered the death of this one person…it was awful!"

Naomi hugged Elena. "You would *never* do that…you have always showed compassion to others…over the years…I mean, for gosh sakes, capital punishment isn't *even legal* in Avalor."

Elena smiled. "You are right, Nomes…I should still talk to Mateo about it, since he is the royal wizard and all…and maybe even Zuzo…since he was in the dream."

Naomi assented. She *suggested* they relax and play a game of chess, in advance of talking to Mateo. In her current state, she concurred with Naomi, which surprised her, as Elena usually wanted to jump into action at once, not rest.

Back in another part of the palace, Isa, Luisa, and Francisco opened the grand doors of the Royal Avaloran Archives. A man in a multicolored robe came toward them, trying to remain gleeful when aiding new researchers, despite the strains of the job. "Is there anything I can help you with today?"

Isa piped up. "Yes, we want to know the origin of a diamond…and its history in Avalor."

The archivist wrote down what they said using his quill pen. "Ok, I got it. I think one of our subject matter experts, Professor Diamante, can give you some more assistance with your query. Let me know if there are any records that you'd like me to pull from the stacks."

He handed them a slip of paper. He added, "fill out this form and I'll be happy to get you the records you need."

He knocked on Prof. Diamante's door and entered, informing her that *three people* had come to see her about some gemstone. She gladly opened the door and beamed.

Seeing that Isa, Luisa, and Francisco were in front of her, she called out to the archivist. "Pablo, why didn't you tell me it was members of the royal family?"

He shrugged. "I'm new here, so I don't know…" She snickered. "It's okay, Pablo, I'm just jesting you. Thanks for your hard work."

He smiled. "The pleasure is all mine, Mx. Diamante."

She proceeded to show them into her office and closed the door. "What can do for you all today?"

Isa explained about the cyan diamond which had mind controlled them and its similarity to one on Elena's staff. Putting one of the shards on the table, Diamante closely examined it with a magnifying glass.

"We certainly will need to examine some of the records."

Isa curiously stared at a painting on one of the walls of her office. "Are…you the daughter of retired professor Mendoza…who wrote all the editions of the *Maru Atlas*?"

Diamante chuckled. "Of course! I'm picking up where her research left off…*unlike* her, I'm fascinated by history and making sure the archives are a place that people's research

questions can be answered."

She went onto explain that she was a historian, dividing her time between work at the archives and as a professor who taught a History and Archival Studies course at the nearby Royal Avaloran University, which Elena had set up after becoming queen to further educate the citizenry. The university was free and anyone who lived in Avalor could attend, regardless of their occupation and social status. Mx. Diamante impressed Isa. She could not fathom how someone could be so organized that they could work in an archives and be a professor *at the same time*!

Diamante knew what record they would need to examine to solve the research query from Isa, Francisco, and Luisa. Getting up from her chair, walking across her room, and closing the door behind her, she led all three of them to the massive research room, lit creatively by natural light, in a design proposed by Isa. She flagged the attention of Pablo and another staff member. Luckily, there were only a few patrons awaiting assistance, allowing the archivists to devote more time to their query. The patrons paid deference to the royal family, like they always did. Mx. Diamante wrote down all the details on the records slip and handed it to Pablo. "I'd like *this book*. You know the one." He grinned back and talked into the stacks.

Like the rudimentary elevator in the palace's central building, Isa had worked with the archivists to develop technical systems to easily, and safely, store the records, coupled with procedures to ensure that each record was thoroughly cleaned and cared for. Even Naomi had come in as a consultant, installing wheels on each of the stacks, resembling those on tall sailing ships in the harbor of Avalor City. This made the archives unique in and of itself.

He soon returned with the book and showed it to Mx. Diamante. "This is the book you requested, correct?"

She nodded and thanked him. Putting the book on the table, she opened the front cover and came across the title: *The Diary of Naona DeSuarto*. Neither Isa, Francisco, nor Luisa had heard of the journal or this person. Diamante cackled.

"Oh, Naona was a daughter of one of the previous kings of Avalor, many years prior to the Elena's parents ruling over Avalor, and lived in the royal palace. It was in the early days of the kingdom when the city was only a smaller town. It didn’t stretch down the hillside like it does now."

She carefully turned through the pages with her bare hands. While some people would have scorned her, declaring that she should wear gloves, when Isa and Elena visited the archives on its grand opening, staff informed them why it wasn’t needed. Both sisters were glad that the staff were informed about their duties and responsibilities, thanking them for correcting a misconception. Mx. Diamante came across one illustration that piqued her interest. It was of a cyan diamond just like the one Isa had described to her earlier. She pushed the book over to Isa.

"Does this look familiar to you?" she inquired. Isa examined the book intently and thought back to the gemstone she had touched in Steamland, shuttering. "Yes…that’s the one."

Mx. Diamante kept turning pages in the diary until she came across a curious entry. She cleared her throat.

"Now, you all might be riveted by this…it is something I have never heard of…Naona writes about this land completely controlled by steam…she came across it when wandering around the palace."

She read on to learn that Naona had lost the diamond on a trip to the mysterious land because someone had taken it from her. Furthermore, she told her parents about it, but they did not believe her. So, she went to a wise sage in the mountains. He told her, Diamante noted, summarizing the book's contents, that while the diamond had untapped magical powers, it possesses whoever holds the stone, making that person, or a group of people, become wild like "a pack of rabid, ravenous monkeys."

Isa felt relieved. "At least we destroyed it…or it cracked into a bunch of pieces."

Everyone nodded. Isa made a bold claim as she unfastened her bag.

"Mx. Diamante, the archives *should* have these gemstone shards."

She pushed away Isa's bag and rejected the offer.

"No thanks, Isa. The archives do not and should not be collecting everything…I have a recommendation: *destroy* all of it, throw it in a volcano…something…so it can't ruin the minds of anyone ever again."

Francisco and Luisa completely wholeheartedly agreed after observing the injuries Elena, Naomi, and Isa had following their inadvertently arrival from Steamland.

Isa, Francisco, and Luisa left the archives, traveling to meet Charoca, a rock monster who had control over volcanic eruptions and lava cooling, to destroy the diamond shards. At the same time, in the main building of the palace, in the room she shared with Naomi, Elena yawned, stretching, with her arm touching Naomi’s hair affectionately.

"Nomes, are you up?"

Naomi playfully giggled and tussled Elena's hair, making it messy.

"I am, my sweet Nena. Why don’t we go out to the veranda and gaze out at the beautiful ocean view?"

Elena grumbled. She acquiesced, even though she remained a bit groggy. Both feasted their eyes on the scenic view of the ocean. Without a second thought, Elena grabbed her scepter. She snickered, staring deep into Naomi's green eyes. "You are the blaze of my life. Just seeing you makes me all warm inside."

They embraced each other. This was interrupted when, unexpectedly, a blast of energy whizzed out of her scepter and into the sky. Elena stepped back, astonished. "What…in the name of Avalor just happened?"

She put the staff down, letting go of it quickly so she would not accidentally cause it to fire a second blast. Naomi could see that she was worried. She tried to reassure her.

"It’s nothing, don't worry 'bout it." Elena giggled.

"Yeah, you are probably right. Let's see how Isa and everyone else is doing."

"Sounds like a plan," Naomi added. Little did they know, Elena’s action touched a craft in the orbit around their planet, Ever Realm, which had come from a far-flung galaxy on a diplomatic mission.

Inside the grayish spaceship hovering inside the planet's orbit, taking readings of the planet’s animal and plant life, and its habitability, the cat-girl glanced at her blond-haired companion.

"What the hell was that? It doesn’t sound good," she remarked.

Her girlfriend shrugged her shoulders. "I don't know…whatever it is, we are losing attitude and are about to crash into the planet’s surface!"

Both started screaming and running around the ship’s bridge, scared about what would happen next. The spacecraft accelerated through the atmosphere.

"Whatever happens next, I won’t lose you again," she said, holding her partner tight, as they looked in terror at what both believed would be their deaths.

Back in the royal palace, Elena and Naomi had just reached the first floor, with Elena wearing a beautiful red dress, the same one she would have worn to Steamland prior to her sister recommending against it. Naomi had on the same outfit as before, with her previous outfit about to be washed. The building, palace, and city shook from shockwaves of an apparent explosion nearby. The tremors stunned Elena to her core. She became more anxious as she began having flashbacks to her nightmare when flying machines attacked Avalor and caused untold destruction.

She reached for her staff and saw it wasn’t attached to her belt. Luckily, Naomi had grabbed it and handed it to her. After thanking her profusely, she quickly clipped it on her leather belt, and stomped out of the palace, shouting a command to her friends: "Gabe! Mateo! Where are you? As queen, I command you come here at once!"

Gabe, who had been within earshot, rapidly came to her side. "General Núñez reporting, ma’am."

Elena rolled her eyes. "You don't *need* to be that formal, Gabe. Just prepare the royal guard, so we can investigate the source of that sound at once. Everyone should be armed…it could be anything."

Gabe nodded. "Certainly. I will do that, right away."

She whispered to him, telling him to meet her outside the gates with a platoon of his finest soldiers. She shrieked once more.

"Mateo, get out here this instant...I can’t do this alone!"

Not seeing him anywhere, she snarled. In this tense atmosphere, she *believed* that Mateo did not care about his royal duties and had something "more important" to do than help her. In fact, he was in a deep cavern of the castle, conducting experiments, so he couldn't hear Elena calling for him.

Ten minutes or so later, a platoon of the finest royal guards had been assembled. A horse-drawn carriage had been brought in to transport them to the city's outskirts rather than walking by foot. Elena and Naomi’s horse neighed as it stood on two legs in front of the legion.

"We do this for AVALOR! Make me and the kingdom proud!"

The horse galloped forward, followed by the carriage, moving at break-neck speed out of the palace, through the city, and into the nearby wooded area, where the craft had been spotted.

The ship continued to smolder. Two women laid in the wreckage, delirious from the crash into the forest, covered in scars and bruises. Before they could think of anything, the royal guards arrived. A rope encircled the cat-girl and she cried out. "Adora, help me!"

Reaching into the air, she reached into the air, about to summon her sword and begin her transformation into a mystical warrior. "For the honor of…" she said and then collapsed onto the ground.

A resolute Elena, atop her horse, declared "bring them to the palace…dungeon...NOW!"

This stunned the guards and *even* Naomi, who would have never expected such a harsh dictate from her wife toward newcomers. Even so, they followed her orders, not wanting to cross her while she was so determined.

Naomi talked softly into Elena's ear. "Are you *sure*…you want to do this?”

Elena nodded. "It is the only way to deal with…invaders. We must protect this kingdom at all costs."

Naomi sighed. "I *hope* you are right…Elena…I really do."

In order to not arouse suspicion about the crash, Elena commanded some of the guards to hide the ship from public view and to make its location off-limits to the public, only accessible to the most senior members of her government. Others in the platoon would come with her and Naomi back to the palace, traveling through the center of town, with the individuals they had captured restrained in the carriage, covered by a cloth, knocked out, and closely guarded. While some people in Avalor City were curious about the sound they had heard earlier, most went about their daily lives, paying it no mind. Instead of giving the citizenry a cover story, she told them the truth: that the matter was being investigated by her best scientists and that the people aboard the craft had been apprehended. This explanation quashed any further inquiries. The citizens trusted Elena, as she was their queen, and she always had their best interests in mind. As a result, many of those she talked to on the

journey back to the palace recounted how they had seen the craft falling from the sky, ending up in the forest.

Back at the main building of the palace, Elena, Naomi, and the royal guards were greeted by Isa, Francisco, and Luisa who had just destroyed the gemstone shards with Charoca's help. About to question her sister, the ushering of two people inside, with their arms bound, and accompanied by royal guards, only raised Isa's suspicions.

"Sis, what are you doing? *Who* are they?"

Elena sneered. "They are invaders…and I *intend* them to stand trial."

Isa stared at her, very confused. "Huh?...how do you know that?"

Exhaling deeply, she gingerly touched Isa's shoulder and talked in a muffled voice.

"Because…I had a nightmare where huge flying machines attacked Avalor…and these two people fell from the sky in some machine…all the people I talked to in the city told me that."

Luisa held Elena close. "Oh, mija…that is terrible! *Come inside* and we can talk about it all over tea." She nodded. Francisco went to the kitchen to boil the water for tea and grab teacups for all of them. Everyone else retired to the library, which was often quiet, to calmly discuss what she saw in her bad dream earlier that day.

Elena tapped her fingers impatiently, awaiting the tea, and wanting to get this conversation over with. She did not want to talk about her dreams with her grandparents…of all people! It was a violation of her personal space, allowing them to pry into her thoughts and feelings. It made her nervous. Everyone else was happy to have her company, eagerly awaiting the tea.

When Francisco came in the platter, she proclaimed "Abuelo, you brought it in…finally… what took you so long?" She gulped down the liquid and immediately calmed down.

While this mood perplexed Naomi and Isa, it concerned Luisa most of all. She grabbed Francisco by the collar and screamed, "what did *you* put in that tea? What have *you* done to our mija!"

Francisco began to open his mouth only to be interrupted by Elena who stood between her two grandparents pulling them together she put her hands on their shoulders.

"Abuela and Abuelo…tea just calms me down…there's *no special ingredient* in this herbal tea."

She added, "I'd like to talk about my dream now and get your advice on what I should do next."

Elena went into a long explanation about her vision she had, undecided whether any of it had any basis in reality, and her suspicion that the ship that crashed near the City was an advance ship from the force readying its invasion of Avalor. Francisco twirled his mustache, thinking of what he should tell his granddaughter.

"Well, mija, you could ask those two people…you put in the dungeon…*where* they came from."

Staying apprehensive, she expressed skepticism about his plan. "Abuelo, are you *really* sure?...I don't want either of those women to harm Nomes…you…Abuela…or anyone in the palace…I mean, one of them tried to summon a weapon!"

Naomi attempted to comfort her wife. "Nana, it's okay…I'll protect you *with my life*…we will all stand by you."

Francisco, Isa, and Luisa nodded their head in concurrence.

Instead of calling Gabe or one of the royal guards to take their newfound guests from the dungeon, she tasked Naomi with the important duty, reminding her to keep on coverings enveloping their heads until they had reached the royal library. Elena paced across the room, anxious to confront the unexpected visitors once again, after imprisoning them.

She pleaded for help. "Abuela, Abuelo, *what* should I say to them? I…*want* to be their friend, not be an enemy."

Luisa touched Elena on the cheek. "Just be yourself, apologize for putting them there, and *be courteous*."

Isa piped in. "You can do it, Sis. I believe in you."

Elena smiled and hugged her sister, always appreciating their sisterly bond.

Naomi came walking into the room and quickly pulled off the coverings. Francisco and Luisa had left and retired to another room in the palace.

"I am Elena Castillo Flores, queen of the Kingdom of Avalor," she forcefully asserted. "I *apologize* for putting you in that...uh…dungeon…it's that I have a *responsibility* to all the citizens of this great kingdom."

Adora would have outstretched her hand to Elena in a gesture of friendship. However, like Catra, her hands remained tied behind her back. She smiled uneasily. "It is…a pleasure to meet you…Miss Flores. I'd shake your hand but…"

Naomi interjected. "…we have you tied up." She further explained Elena's reasoning. "My wife doesn't know if she can trust you yet…since you *had a weapon*…and came from some unknown craft which fell from the sky."

Isa voiced her agreement. "I head the science academy here in Avalor and I've never seen such a vessel…it is all *so mysterious* to me…so tell me…"

Elena cut her off. "Sis, I appreciate it…Nevertheless, *I'm asking* the questions here. Please, if you would both sit down and introduce yourselves so we can get better antiquated with each other."

Adora and Catra sat down on a plush couch in the library's center, staring at one another, scared about what they would be asked.

Clearing her throat, Adora started. "I'mm Adora, Princess of Power…and I can transform into an eight-foot-tall warrior named She-Ra…with a sword."

Catra shook her head. "Adora! You are missing the most important part…you are my girlfriend…companion…partner…whatever you want to call it."

"Right, right," Adora said, nervously laughing.

Elena stroked her chin. "Ok, you are a couple…got it."

They thought she would stop there, but her line of questioning *became more aggressive*.

"Where do you hail from…and why is that metal monstrosity in *MY* kingdom!?...*are you* part of an invasion force from the far-away realm of Steamland?"

As Adora started to open her mouth, Catra spoke up instead. "Lady, I *don't know* where you get your ideas…we are from a planet called Etheria on a peaceful quest to make contact with those on other worlds…that monstrosity you talk about is a spaceship…and it's called *Darla*."

Adora expounded on the words of her girlfriend. "…and we don't know what Steamland even is…and have never heard of it…we know nothing about an assault on your delightful kingdom."

Elena remained dumbfounded. She thought she had gauged Catra and Adora right, believing they were a manifestation of her nightmare. Her assessment had been plain wrong. Space travelers in Avalor? Why? She decided to ask them further questions.

"So, you aren't from Steamland, and are from some world called Etheria…how…and why did you end up here?"

Catra growled and gritted her teeth. "Because something struck our craft and caused us to crash in the forest…then *you* locked up me and my girlfriend in a cell!...what the fuck, man!"

Adora sought to lower the emotional temperature in the room. "Catra can have a foul mouth sometimes…I *apologize* for that…but could you please…untie our hands?"

As Elena pondered that possibility, Naomi had a brilliant idea. "Why don't we all go to the courtyard…Adora, then, you can transform into that magical warrior you talked about."

"I don't want to…do it…in public…around people I don't know…can we do it in this room instead, Miss Flores?" Adora timidly remarked.

Elena sighed. "Fine."

She then gave several stipulations. "…If you break anything…or try anything funky, try to injure me or my friends, you're going right back in the dungeon."

Adora grumbled. Naomi untied her hands. She decided to do the same for Catra, to be fair to both of them, giving her the same ultimatum, something she reluctantly followed.

Adora outstretched her hand, formed the sword, and her voice boomed. "For the honor of greyskull!"

Catra watched Adora *with awe*, especially her glowing hair and clothing, while Isa and Naomi were amazed. Even with the power and skills that Elena had from wielding the scepter, she did not have the ability to transform.

Mateo came into the library at that very second and prepared his tamborita. "Elena, who the heck is that? And who is that girl…that looks like a cat? And why are *they* in the palace!"

She laughed it off. "Oh, Mateo, so nice of you to join us…I called for you earlier, but you *didn't come*."

He had no idea what she meant. "What are you talking about?"

Naomi ran over to him and whispered in his ear, telling him who they were.

"A ship from the sky…that was found in the forest…and people from another planet? Jeez, I have missed a lot, *apparently*."

Elena teased him. "I's okay…I guess you had *more important things* to do than helping… your kingdom."

Mateo did not know what to say to her. He attempted to set the record straight. "I was deep below the castle…conducting experiments." Elena and everyone else accepted his explanation, even though she remained annoyed.

Adora reverted to her normal form and her sword dissipated into the air. Elena pulled everyone close and tried to hug them all, pronouncing "we will all be friends…I can feel it… and will go on wonderful adventures together!"

"Here here!" Naomi exclaimed.

The road ahead remained uncertain. The airships, or more accurately "death planes," and metal monstrosities, were being reinforced with added armaments and metal plating, in the steam-powered city in another part of the universe, as the city began mobilizing an army to strike Avalor in a sneak attack and turn it into a vassal state of Steamland, fighting for the honor of Alva Gunderson. Would Elena, Naomi, and Isa *be able* to stop this assault? Or would they find out too late, resulting in Avalor surrendering to Steamland? Either way, *time was running out* for Elena, and her friends, with her dream seeming even closer to becoming a reality.

End Notes

I used the description of the Arch-Druidess on the Disenchantment Wiki, the Professor Mendoza, Mateo's Tamborita, Avalor, Charoca, and Mateo pages on the Elena of Avalor wiki. The part about preservation and access policies I based loosely on the Rules of Access of the Center for Legislative Archives (https://www.archives.gov/legislative/research/rules-of-access.html) and the preservation policy of the Smithsonian Archives (https://siarchives.si.edu/what-we-do/preservation/introduction). As such, I also am proud of myself for incorporating libraries and archives into this story! Every little bit to dispel stereotypes helps. My description of a historian working in the archives derives from my personal experience of working in an archives under a guy who was a historian in my first job after college. I did more historical work, but I enjoyed it so much, and pushed me toward the archives (and library) field.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!